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# Cutting the Base Force Strategies for Building Consensus

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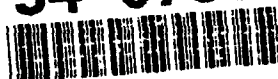
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# ABSTRACT

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President Clinton promised throughout his campaign to reduce DOD spending during the period 1993-97 from \$1.42 trillion to \$1.36 trillion, a \$60 billion reduction. His goal while achieving this near term savings, is to maintain the military as an effective instrument of power for promoting current and long-term US security in the "New World Order". This paper reviews the domestic and international elements eager to protect their shares of, and power in the US defense pie, and recommends strategies President Clinton should follow to build effective bi-partisan and allied consensus to support his defense reductions.

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# **Cutting the Base Force Strategies for Building Consensus**

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Cutting the Base Force;  
Strategies for Building Consensus

INTRODUCTION

"The problem of a conservative State is to find the type of strategy that is suited to fulfill its inherently more limited object in the most strength-conserving way - so as to insure its future as well as its present. At first glance, it might seem that pure defense would be the most economical method; but that implies static defense - and historical experience warns us that it is a dangerously brittle method on which to rely. Economy of force and deterrent effect are best combined in the defensive-offensive method, based on high mobility that carries the power of quick riposte." 1.

President Clinton promised throughout his campaign to reduce DOD spending during the period 1993-97 from \$1.42 trillion to \$1.36 trillion, a \$60 billion reduction. 2. In economic terms, this is a reduction from 3.6% of the gross national product to 3% of GNP by the end of 1996. His goal while achieving this near term savings is to continue to maintain the military's role and importance as an effective instrument of power for promoting current and long-term US security in the "New World Order". While the President's aims may be noble, standing in his way will be various threats to the US as well as domestic and international elements eager to protect their shares of, and power in, the U.S. defense pie. Roughly 20% of

federal spending is defense related, but defense also accounts for more than half of all discretionary spending due to big ticket entitlement programs mandated by law. 3. Defense is therefore an easy mark for budget reductions. The challenge to President Clinton in promoting our National Security Strategy, is his ability to retain a world wide respected U.S. military force capable, if necessary, of providing strength to his policies. What then are the specific cuts that President Clinton must make for the U.S. to stay strong without breaking the bank? And what are the strategies he must follow to build effective bi-partisan and allied consensus to support these reductions?

#### BACKGROUND

To understand where the President is aiming, you must first know the base line he inherited on 20 January 1993. The base force, including the military support capabilities of space, transportation, reconstitution, and research and development, was developed around four conceptual packages; 1) Strategic Forces, 2) Pacific Forces, 3) Atlantic Forces, and 4) Contingency Forces. As viewed by the previous administration, the base force was to take shape over the period of Fiscal Years 1990 thru 1995. It was projected to be as follows: 4.

Army	<u>FY90</u>	<u>FY95</u>
	28 Divisions (18 Active)	18 Divisions (12 Active)
Navy	16 Carrier Battle Groups	13 including 1 for training

	15 Carrier Air Wings (13 Active)	13 (11 Active)
	33 Nuclear Ballistic Subs	23
	4 Battle Ships	0
	547 Ships	452 Ships
Marines	4 Divisions (3 Active)	4 Divisions (2.3) Active
Air Force	36 Fighter Wing Equivalents (24 Active)	26.5 (15.25 Active)
	268 Heavy Bombers	181 Heavy Bombers

This reduction represented a 25% drop in active duty strength from the high of 1987 levels and a 20% reduction in strength for Reserve and DOD civilians. Additionally, 491 overseas bases would be closed, approximately 30% of our total - with a goal of shutting down 10% more. Domestically, about 9% of our bases would be closed.

While announcing this reduction, General Powell in his statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee on 31 January 1992 said: "We have shifted our planning focus from a single monolithic global scenario to an array of regional scenarios..." 5. He further stated, "Our national military strategy is based upon four foundations ... strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, crisis response and reconstitution." 6. Given this national military strategy, what values will the new President embrace and what must he deal with in the domestic and international environments to affect change in military strategy and hence a new base force?



## Values and Environments

Our basic values, as we enter the second millennium, will likely remain unchanged. President Bush, referring to the end of the Cold War in the preface of the January 1993 edition of the National Security Strategy of the United States summarized these values by stating:

More than anything else, our achievements are testament to the values that define us as a Nation - freedom, compassion, justice, opportunity, the rule of law, and hope. The impoverished, the oppressed, and the weak have always looked to the United States to be strong, to be capable, and to care. Perhaps more than anything else, they have depended on us to lead. 7.

Freedom, survival, prosperity and peace, as expressed in our Framework for Grand Strategy, are all values encompassed in the 1993 National Security Strategy. Nothing President Clinton said in his campaign, or since his inauguration, contradicts the values expressed by his predecessor. President Clinton must constantly consider the changing inputs of the domestic and international environments and how they affect these values.

The domestic environment will resist further military reduction as reduction impacts on the local geographic areas and on congressional power bases. Each Congressman, besides being a committee member, represents a specific region complete with its own culture, economy, politics, and ideology - liberal to conservative. Since each \$1 billion in defense spending allegedly supports 25,000

to 35,000 jobs, (8) elements of the Federal government (particularly Congress), state and local governments and citizens will aggressively fight cutbacks that impact their prosperity.

The international environment President Clinton must build consensus with, is replete with various alliances, alignments, international organizations, a world-wide economic system, technology expansion and a future trend many refer to as "The New World Order". His problem in building consensus in this environment will be the conflicting attitudes and demands between different regions, and the size and increasing complexity of the international body.

To build cohesive domestic and international support requires a look at our national interests and objectives, and the threats to them. Afterwards, I will specify new areas for reduction in military forces and develop strategies to build domestic and allied consensus.

#### National Interests

The war was over, the military was shrinking and the nation's attention was focused on domestic needs - jobs, converting the defense industry to civilian uses, education. The president, a Democrat, called for a major overhaul of the military and Congress went to work... That was 1946, but history seems ready to repeat itself. The Cold War is over, the military is shrinking and issues like jobs, industrial conversion, education and crime top the national agenda. 9.

Our interests and objectives for the foreseeable future will likely remain the same as those found in the January 1993 National Security Strategy of the United States. It states: "Foremost, the United States must ensure its security as a free and independent nation, and the protection of its fundamental values, institutions and people. This is a sovereign responsibility which we will not abdicate to any other nation or collective organization." 10. Our four main national interests/objectives are: 11.

1. Global and regional stability which encourages peaceful change and progress.
2. Open, democratic and representative political systems worldwide.
3. An open international trading and economic system which benefits all participants.
4. An enduring global faith in America - that it can and will lead in a collective response to the world's crises.

The threats to these interest/objectives are varied and complex. Sociologically, our domestic society is not as cohesive as it once was, and the world society is fragmenting as new nations form and ethnic rivalries buried for years flare up.

Environmentally, we have not always been as supportive of the environment as some would prefer. However, with Vice President Gore in office and President Clinton's desire to make the Environmental Protection Agency a cabinet level organization, our threats to the world's environment will receive higher priority.

Politically, both at home and abroad, we are seeing profound changes in the landscape. For the first time in twelve years, a democrat is in the White House and approximately 25% of Congressmen in the democratically controlled Congress are new themselves. It would be easier to classify the "New World Order" as the "New World Disorder" with the breakup of the USSR, a new reunified Germany racked by continued racial unrest, Bosnia's civil war, Somalia's starving population, China in competition with Japan, and Islamic Fundamentalism spreading. Adding to the chaos is the demand of developing countries for improved economic conditions above mere survival level and a catastrophic flow of illegal drugs into the developed nations. Disorder tugs at the very fabric of our national interests.

Economically, the current threat is the poor performance of our own economy - just now slowly recovering from a recession, that spread to the entire world. Although poor nations can't economically afford guns, they still seem to be the major customers in an expanded military market that reflects a world-wide proliferation of conventional arms. And by some reports - attempts at obtaining nuclear arms as well as the poor man's weapons of mass destruction - biological and chemical agents.

As President Clinton and his administration seek further reductions in the military, our national strategy must remain as a bedrock to base change on. Short range decisions made in lieu of long range national strategy, will undermine the Nation's defense and our ability to protect our interests. Base force reductions must consider our leadership role in the world, our alliances (and

their inherent limitations) as well as our own economic resources. We do not want to become the world's policeman nor do we want to forcibly impose our will to create a "Pax Americana". We must lead from a position of strength. A passage in Global Changes and Domestic Transformation portrayed our role well when it stated: "If the U.S. is now unable or unwilling to lead, there is a danger that no one else will step into the void." 12. Given this grim picture, where can President Clinton reduce the military further?

#### A Smaller Base Force

Additional cuts to the military base force will result largely from reductions to the force versus further restructuring of the force. To be sure, the new administration and Congress will direct further restructuring (primarily towards eliminating redundancies and inefficiencies) due to the military departments resisting change to the current paradigm found in the 1993 Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States Report. 14. But eliminating current redundancies such as pilot training, and inefficiencies such as single service maintenance depots, while making the military more "jointed", will not alone produce the \$60 billion cut required.

There are numerous reduction options that may be argued as the optimum. However, they are beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, I am focusing my consensus strategy on implementation of Option C in Secretary of Defense Aspin's report: "An Approach To

Sizing American Conventional Forces For the Post-Soviet Era: Four Illustrative Approaches" 15; and as endorsed by President Clinton during his election campaign. This option is predicated on:

The threats to American security will be broader and more diverse and the security environment will be murkier, more ambiguous and more fluid. The threats will be harder to characterize and pin down than during the Cold War.

The military, therefore, must be more versatile and easier to move. Instead of the tanks, bombers, submarines and nuclear weapons designed to annihilate the Soviet Union, the United States needs a military that can deploy swiftly to the Middle East, Southwest Asia, North Korea and other trouble spots around the world.

Troops must be trained to fight terrorism and drug trafficking, be able to conduct peacemaking and peacekeeping tasks, and be ready to render humanitarian assistance.

"Option C" includes:

- enough troops to fight a Desert Storm-size war with enough extra troops to be able to rotate troops home during prolonged war;
- enough additional troops to fight a Panama-size contingency at the same time;

- adequate troops to conduct a major humanitarian mission;
- sizeable lift capacity and generous war-supply prepositioning. 16.

Specific cuts include a further reduction of active Army troop strength down to a total of nine combat divisions. The plausible candidates will be most light infantry divisions and a deep cut in the military structure in Europe. Europe could have one Corps (-) and associated support. This leaves Europe with approximately 100,000 active duty military personnel of all services. It is enough to show a continuing commitment, but places more reliance on our allies/alliances such as NATO's implementation of its planned multi-national force structure and the Allied Command Europe's Rapid Reaction Corps.

The Navy will drop to twelve Carrier Battle Groups and a 340 ship force - the balance going into retirement or mothballed. The Air Force will reduce to 10 active Fighter Wing equivalents. SDI will be essentially scaled back to ground-based systems for continental US defense. The number of active duty Marine divisions will be cut slightly down from 2.3 divisions to 2 divisions. Major DOD acquisition programs such as the B-2, C-17, Sea Wolf Submarine and the Comanche Helicopter are also being evaluated for termination, or low rate production (so as to maintain a reconstitution/production base).

The reserve forces are also eyed for reductions yet to be specified. However, since these cuts are responsive to much more diversive and intensive political, economic and military pressures,

strategies to accomplish specific reserve reductions should be the subject of its own paper.

The active force cuts are deep and no doubt will cause consternation among our allies and in Congressional Committees and defense interest groups. We are entering a new era with a shrinking defense budget, a smaller base force and the cancellation of a new generation of weapon systems while our current equipment is aging and the funds to maintain it are less. However, the cuts are real, and allow us to meet potential regional threats. They support the four foundations of our national military strategy: strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, crisis response and reconstitution. The U.S. will not be another "has been". It will be a superpower. The challenge will be building consensus for the proposed reductions.

#### Strategies for Consensus

Consensus is defined by Websters Dictionary as "general" agreement. The emphasis I have added is to the word general agreement vice total agreement. President Clinton does not have to achieve unanimity, only a majority, for his new base force policy. To develop consensus, President Clinton must be cognizant of the existing power clusters. Daniel Ogden wrote in his article on Power Cluster Models: "... policy is made within a system of semi-autonomous power clusters ... each cluster operates quite independently of all other clusters to identify policy issues, shape policy alternatives, propose new legislation, and implement policy."

19. President Clinton must identify the pertinent clusters,



recognize their existence, understand how they operate, their pattern of behavior, and then deal with them to build consensus for his policy. He must select key participants to become partners in his policy and allow them to assist in substantive decisions. They must become his representatives in their own power clusters. Simultaneously he must approach his task like that of a new group being formed. President Clinton and the bi-partisan congress, as well our allies, will go through the four normal stages of any group behavior - form, norm, storm and perform.

In his new administration and "New World Order", "executive" groups are just beginning to form. Here bi-partisan/country behaviors are developing. Each entity is attempting to establish its behavior as a part of the new total body. As we move into the second phase, "norm", the group, whether it be Congress or the World Politik, will attempt to establish an agenda based on collective common values, interests and objectives. President Clinton must actively participate in this stage and lay out the views expressed in the front half of this paper if he is to succeed in encouraging a "norm/culture" that advocates innovation, commitment and motivation (common values expressed by him). Naturally, we then will enter a third stage, "storm", where some members of Congress and the world community will likely balk at the norms established and attempt to "fight" the system by reestablishing those values, interests and objectives from where their power base came. President Clinton must stand firm, work within existing power structures and stay true to his beliefs in the public's interest. Next, the President, Congress and the nations of the world will enter the fourth stage of group

development which is "perform". Here he will find the basic agreement for the majority to generally work together towards the common goal of peace and stability with economic prosperity - critical foundations for building a consensus to reduce the military.

President Clinton's ability to win consensus will require his direct leadership and team building efforts until he can form his own supporting power groups to advance policy decisions. He must build bi-partisan and allied consensus in the political, military and economic arenas. Although discussed separately here, all three arenas must be woven together to carry his policy to completion.

#### Political Considerations

The Clinton administration, in one of the first departures from its predecessor's foreign policy, is backing proposals for a UN rapid deployment force to allow the world body to react more quickly to prevent or tame regional crises. 20.

Here more than any other area, President Clinton must prevail. As the leader of the US in a unipolar, intra-related world, most nations recognize him as the leader of the New World Order. We are irreversibly bound in a political environment that shuns isolationism. However, the paradigm shift away from the Cold War also allows us a logical window of opportunity to restructure and reduce our military forces. President Clinton's best strategy with allies will be to approach troop reductions in Europe with a

cooperative mode (vice competitive) negotiating strategy. This mode allows all parties to satisfy their needs and interests, and has the support and commitment of participants. 21.

His source of strength in the international environment rests on the nation's geostrategic position, our military projection capabilities, potential political leverage of a one party, democratically controlled government, and the nation's potential economic power. Traditional private diplomatic consultations, public diplomacy and military arms controls against unstable countries/regions are all instruments of power in the US strategy quiver.

President Clinton must persuade, negotiate and build linkage with our allies who are stakeholders in Europe. They must have a sense of ownership in the plan. For example, we can negotiate a quid pro quo arrangement backing Germany's admission to the UN Security Council in return for their support of a reduced US military presence in Europe. Or, we can offer supporting Eastern European nations sponsorship into NATO in return for their support of U.S. troop reductions. The U.S. must place more emphasis on collective security arrangements as well as bilateral treaties in order to shift the total burden of world stability off our shoulders and to maintain a balance of power around the globe. 22.

The current situation in Congress right now is not a split between hawks and doves, between liberals and conservatives, between Democrats and Republicans, it's between those people that have military bases and

facilities and things in their districts and those who don't. 23.

On the domestic front, President Clinton must gain a bi-partisan consensus with a win-win strategy. Despite constituent fed politics, a Democratically controlled House and Senate will help the President in obtaining his proposed reductions. Republican support is also required. He can achieve win-win consensus through appointing several well known Republicans to key administration positions. As stated by President Clinton on 12 Nov. 1992, these Republicans must share the President-elect's goal of "restoring economic growth, job creation and income, and strength to this country." 24.

President Clinton must find incentives to make reluctant congressman want to support his plan. Options include lobbying defense industry groups, appeals through the media to the American people for his vision, and symbolic efforts such as unilaterally reducing not only his own White House staff, but also deep cuts in all executive agencies. President Clinton must work aggressively for programs to assist congressional districts affected by base closings or defense industry slowdowns. These programs could be funded initially by savings on defense until the programs are self sustaining or a sunset provision takes effect. One such program is a draft plan to use decommissioned military bases and other suitable federal facilities to house the homeless. 25.

## Economic Considerations

Staggering under heavy budget deficits, their economies sinking deeper into recession, West Europeans are aiming at an easy target for austerity; their armed forces. 26.

Allied consensus for US military reductions during a world-wide recession will be difficult but not impossible to achieve. Allies will be reluctant to pick up additional responsibilities for defense. A problem-solving strategy working with economic interest groups similar to the approach we used at the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) talks would be best; ie. level the playing field. 27. Other economic strategies available to President Clinton include use of most favored nation trade status, new trade blocks, deregulation of specific categories of commerce, and trade restrictions. A healthy world economy buying butter instead of guns provides markets for all, and provides a hedge against slipping again into the abyss of totalitarianism, communism and dictatorship.

Our allies will resist accepting more of the economic defense burden, but through encouragement, respect for their ideas, and support to key leaders, we can affect change. We should build a strategic "long haul" philosophy into short-term military reductions. Allies must focus their long-term national objectives based on US military assistance rather than massive forward based US troops. We must give credence to the myth that the world is no longer facing a nuclear threat. Attendance by President Clinton at ceremonial events such as overseas base closings and celebration of

German Reunification Day, etc. will show his continuing public support and add to favorable consensus for his reductions.

By the next presidential election, we are already scheduled to be spending less on our armed forces as a share of our economy than any year since before Pearl Harbor. 28.

Domestically, President Clinton must build consensus again with a win-win strategy within the framework of existing power spheres. He must work aggressively for programs to assist workers and regions affected by troop/acquisition reductions and base closing. He must sell domestic interests groups and a bi-partisan Congress that among other ideas, reductions in defense spending could allow short-term tax cuts to stimulate the economy.

President Clinton must continue to play the notion that the so called "peace dividend" will help reduce the budget and the deficit, but not at the expense of research and development dollars or plant conversions which help American industry grow into new fields. Our national industrial power must remain robust if we are to continue to be a economically and militarily strong nation. As Woodrow Wilson once said: "It is not an Army we must prepare for war - it is a nation".

Additionally, President Clinton must convince Congress and the nation that by reducing our active structure and having our allies rely more on US Military Assistance/Foreign Military Sales Programs, our industrial base will remain the "arsenal of democracy." This approach supports our military strategy of reconstitution. Again

symbolic activities such as visiting units scheduled for deactivation, and perpetuating his campaign myth of change for the better with a new hope in a New World will help obtain popular and bi-partisan support.

#### Military Considerations

By its very nature, the allies will be reluctant to see the sole superpower weaken itself with further military reductions. Many nations in the world look upon the US as the beacon of stability - the single nation without colonial interest and the power to right all wrongs. President Clinton must use a win-win strategy in this arena. He must convince our allies that we will still lead democracy's charge, that we still have sufficient power to win regional conflicts, to conduct peacemaking and peacekeeping operations and to support humanitarian relief emergencies. He must convince the world he has not created a "hollow" or a "shallow" force. But beyond that, he must convince our allies that reduced US military expenditures will enable our own economy to grow stronger, and hence the world economy as a whole. We all win then.

Our ability to rapidly project power has been indelibly printed on the face of the earth. Maintaining this capability and an effective mobilization base provides a perception of military strength - possibly beyond what we will actually possess. Our continued military prowessness coupled with support fo a UN rapid deployment force, will be a deterrent and a crisis response to maintain a more stable world.

Domestically, President Clinton is the first non-veteran president since World War II. 29. He must come to grips with the U.S. military and establish his credibility in defense issues, without alienating himself or creating an adverse relationship. He can accomplish this task if he utilizes the power cluster model.

Once orders are given, the US military will obey the oath of enlistment and follow the directions of the Commander-in-Chief. However, obtaining majority domestic consensus requires the support of the entire trinity Clausewitz appropriately described as: the will of the people, the government and the military commander. 30. Symbolic acts such as asking the highly respected General Powell to stay on as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, attendance by President Clinton at base closing and unit deactivation ceremonies, and visits to other military service bases, will show the public his interest in defense issues and will go a long way in building favorable consensus amongst the people and the military towards the proposed reductions. These acts indicate a desire to remain military resolute in consonance with the four pillars of our national military strategy, despite additional reductions. As stated by Bolman and Deal in their book, Reframing Organizations: "Symbolic events initiate a sequence of ritualistic steps that allow people to let go of the past, deal with the present and, move into a meaningful future. But unless people recognize their loss, they will vacillate between hanging onto the past and plunging into a meaningless future". 31.

President Clinton should build bi-partisan consensus with the third part of the trinity through a strategy of problem solving -



best approached through one-on-one talks with individual Congressmen. A "friendly" strategy with power brokers would be to visit democratic congressman (perhaps conduct town meetings) in their home district to enhance their political recognition with constituents, and to visit republican congressmen in their House/Senate offices. In other words - President Clinton should get out of the White House and make his pitch personal and hard to resist by special interest groups. Extensive use of the media to play up the new base force capabilities and a concerted, coordinated campaign to generate popular support for the reductions will overcome lingering doubts of a reduced military.

#### Conclusion

No other nation on earth has the power we possess. More important, no other nation on earth has the trusted power that we possess. We are obligated to lead. If the free world is to harvest the hope and fulfill the promise that our great victory in the Cold War has offered us, America must shoulder the responsibility of its power. The last best hope of earth has no other choice. We must lead.

We cannot lead without our armed forces. Economic power is essential; political and diplomatic skills are needed; the power of our beliefs and our values is fundamental to any success we might achieve; but

the presence of our arms to buttress these other elements of our power is as critical to us as the freedom we so adore. Our arms must be second to none. 32.

The proposed base force reductions may turn out to be not enough, or even too much, due to the current fluid state of the world. Hopefully, by the year 2010 our fighting forces will not resemble a living reenactment display -- and we will not look back and realize in 1993 we found the most "cost efficient force" to lose the next war. President Clinton, in using the techniques mentioned in this paper, must be cognizant of the difficulties and the effectiveness inherent to these consensus building strategies. Specifically, he must be constantly attuned to the fact that each power cluster and the individuals within the power clusters, will react differently to the strategies -- the variations are immense. The consensus strategies mentioned herein, provides a "general framework" that must be individually tailored to all clusters and personalities based on their values, environments and interests. To make his national strategy work - of reducing the military while maintaining it as an effective instrument of power - President Clinton will need to play his cards carefully.

National strategy at best is like playing poker. You play by the existing rules - but you play the cards when the odds are good and fold them when they're bad. The aim is to build consensus that your new hand is better than anyone else's. President Clinton can carry his agenda if he tailors his consensus building approach to each player. He will win depending on how he plays his political, economic and military aces in the power game.

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